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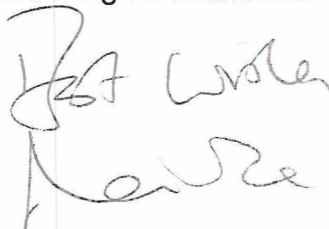
Dear Maureen

I am delighted to have this early opportunity to write to you in my new capacity as Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, to inform the ICI Committee about the progress that is being made with the delivery of *Scotland's Digital Future – Infrastructure Action Plan Step Change 2015 – Procurement Plan*.

The procurement plan, which was published at the end of May 2012, set out our approach to providing next generation broadband across Scotland. It acknowledged that the process of procurement for the Highlands and Islands was already far advanced and therefore focussed on plans to provide such infrastructure across the rest of Scotland.

A public consultation on our plans is an essential part of the procurement process and I am writing to inform you that the Scottish Government will initiate this consultation on 5 October 2012. A consultation document will be placed on the Scottish Government's website that will set out the areas that are considered to be in scope of the procurement and invite comment from a range of suppliers and stakeholders on whether this assessment is accurate and, more generally, on the aims and approach we are proposing to take. I would, of course, welcome your Committee's input.

I hope this notification is helpful to the Committee given its longstanding and ongoing interest in the progress we are making in delivering Scotland's digital ambitions.



NICOLA STURGEON